

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please replace paragraph [0015] with the following amended paragraph:

[0015] Figure 1 illustrates an endoscope insertion shaft 100 comprising a tubular member 102 having an axis 120. The endoscope insertion shaft 100 also comprises a distal end 122 (also shown in Fig. 2.) and a proximal end 124. The distal end 122 includes a collar 116 encompassing the tubular member 102. The proximal end 124 includes an adapter 114 for attaching the endoscope insertion shaft 100 to ancillary medical apparatus. The adapter ~~444~~ 114 is connected to the tubular member 102 by a bonded joint 112.

Please replace paragraph [0016] with the following amended paragraph:

[0016] The tubular member 102 includes at least one aperture or slot 118. The slots 118 may be of any size, configuration or orientation so as to provide desirable mechanical properties in the endoscope insertion shaft 100 such as torsional stability, hoop strength, beam strength, flexibility, elasticity and durometer (if applicable), etc. The spacing, arrangement, and location of the slots 118 in the endoscope insertion shaft 100 are such as to provide the desired degree of flexibility in the desired direction, such as in the longitudinal or axial directions. In one embodiment, the slots 118 extend over the entire length of the endoscope insertion shaft 100. In another embodiment, the slots 118 extend only over a portion of the length of the endoscope insertion shaft 100. The slots 118 may be arranged in different portions of the tubular member 102 of the endoscope insertion shaft ~~448~~ 100.